

Docket No.: 1614.1404

Serial No. 10/849,192

AMENDMENTS TO THE DRAWINGS:

The attached drawings include changes to FIGS. 1, 2, and 3, to designate same by the legend - -PRIOR ART- -.

Approval of these changes and entry of the corrected Drawings is respectfully requested.

REMARKS

In the Office Action the Examiner noted that claims 1-13 are pending in the application, and the Examiner rejected all claims. By this Amendment, claims 7 and 11 have been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer, claims 1, 8-10, and 12 have been amended, and new claim 14 has been added. No new matter has been presented. Thus, claims 1-6, 8-10, and 12-15 are pending in the application. The Examiner's rejections are traversed below, and reconsideration of all rejected claims is respectfully requested.

Objection To the Specification

In item 1 on page 2 of the Office Action the Examiner objected to the disclosure because of an informality. Specifically, the Examiner stated that Figure 4 shows the blade enclosure having a reference number 16, while the specification refers to the same element as reference number 16A.

By this Amendment, the specification has been amended to refer to the blade enclosure in Figure 4 by reference number 16. Therefore, the Applicants respectfully request the withdrawal of the Examiner's objection to the disclosure.

Objections To Drawings

In item 2 on page 2 of the Office Action the Examiner stated that Figures 1-3 should be designated as "PRIOR ART" because only that which is old is illustrated.

By this Amendment, Figures 1-3 have been amended to include the designation suggested by the Examiner. Therefore, the Applicants respectfully request the withdrawal of the Examiner's objections to the drawings.

Claim Objections

In item 3 on page 2 of the Office Action the Examiner objected to claim 8 because the acronym "BLSR" was not defined in the claim.

By this Amendment, claims 8-9 have been amended to define the acronym. Therefore, the Applicants respectfully request the withdrawal of the Examiner's objection to claim 8.

Claim Rejections Under 35 USC §102

In item 4 on pages 3-4 of the Office Action the Examiner rejected claims 1-5 and 7-13 under 35 U.S.C. §102(e) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 6,693,901, issued to Byers et al. (hereinafter referred to as "Byers"). The Applicants respectfully traverse the Examiner's rejections of these claims.

Claim 1 of the present application, as amended, recites a back plane which is situated inside said blade enclosure and provides a two-fiber ring connection for the internal optical signal interface unit between the main-signal blades, wherein the two-fiber ring connection has two fibers connecting between two adjacent main-signal blades. The Applicants respectfully submit that Byers does not disclose at least these features of claim 1.

Byers discloses an electronic system for networking, switching, or computing that includes a backplane-based interconnection system having backplane traces which are configured to form point-to-point connections from backplane to backplane (Abstract). In other words, the circuit boards 104a-104d that are connected to the backplane 102 each have point-to-point connections 106a-106-f, which are used to route electrical signals between the circuit boards 104a-104d (Column 2, Lines 54-61). The connections 106g-106j may also be formed in a ring configuration, as shown in Figure 3, but the connections 106g-106j are still point-to-point connections.

This is in direct contrast to claim 1 of the present application, which recites a two-fiber ring connection having two fibers connecting between two adjacent main-signal blades used for optical signals. As this two-fiber ring connection is not a point-to-point connection as disclosed in Byers, which does not disclose the ring transmission path being pulled into the circuits 104a-104d in two places, the use of a bypass blade as claimed in claim 2 is possible, as is the use of the two-fiber BLSR as claimed in claims 8 and 9.

Therefore, Byers does not disclose or suggest at least the feature of "a back plane which is situated inside said blade enclosure and provides a two-fiber ring connection for the internal optical signal interface unit between the main-signal blades, wherein the two-fiber ring connection has two fibers connecting between two adjacent main-signal blades." Accordingly, Byers does not disclose every element of the Applicants' claim 1. In order for a reference to anticipate a claim, the reference must teach each and every element of the claim (MPEP §2131). Therefore, since Byers does not disclose the features recited in independent claim 1,

as stated above, it is respectfully submitted that claim 1 patentably distinguishes over Byers, and withdrawal of the §102(e) rejection is earnestly and respectfully solicited.

Claims 2-5, 8-10, and 12-13 depend from claim 1 and include all of the features of that claim plus additional features which are not taught or suggested by Byers. Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that claims 2-5, 8-10, and 12-13 also patentably distinguish over Byers.

Claim Rejections Under 35 USC §103

In item 5 on pages 4-5 of the Office Action the Examiner rejected claim 6 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Byers as applied to claims 1-5 and 7-13, and further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,623,177, issued to Chilton (hereinafter referred to as "Chilton"). The Applicants respectfully traverse the Examiner's rejection of this claim.

As discussed in the previous section of this Amendment, claim 1 patentably distinguishes over Byers. Further, as Chilton apparently teaches an optical communications system with a back plane that connects a plurality of cards, wherein if a card is removed the back plane provides coupling to the other cards, Chilton does not cure the deficiency of Byers regarding claim 1. Since claim 6 depends from claim 1 and includes all of the features of that claim plus additional features which are not taught or suggested by the cited references, it is respectfully submitted that claim 6 also patentably distinguishes over the cited references.

New Claims 14-15

New claims 14-15 are directed to a blade-type optical transmission apparatus having a plurality of main-signal blades and a back plane connecting the main signal blades through a two-fiber ring connection. Therefore, it is respectfully submitted that claims 14-15 patentably distinguish over the cited references.

Summary

By this Amendment, the specification and claims 1, 8-10, and 12 have been amended. Also, claims 7 and 11 have been cancelled without prejudice or disclaimer, and new claims 14-15 have been added. No new matter has been presented. Thus, claims 1-6, 8-10, and 12-15 are pending in the application.

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There being no further outstanding objections or rejections, it is respectfully submitted that the application is in condition for allowance. An early action to that effect is courteously solicited.

Finally, if there are any formal matters remaining after this response, the Examiner is requested to telephone the undersigned to attend to these matters.

If there are any additional fees associated with filing of this Amendment, please charge the same to our Deposit Account No. 19-3935.

Respectfully submitted,

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